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Something

CONCERNING THE Two Births.

IN ſerious Meditation, and weighty Conſideration, upon thoſe words of Chriſt to *Nichodemus*, John 3. 3. *Except a man be born again he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*: And hereby it doth plainly appear that there is an abſolute neceſſity of a ſecond *Birth*, and Work of *Regeneration*: And ſeeing it is thus, it greatly concerns all, that none neglect nor ſlight the day of their *Viſitation*, leſt it be ſaid unto them, as it was ſaid unto *Jeruſalem* of old, *O* Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, *thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee; How often would I have gathered thee, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickins under her wings, and ye would not*, Matth. 23. 37. Here was the Love of God in Jeſus Chriſt unto *Jeruſalem*, but *Jeruſalem*

neglected, or rather rejected the day of their *Viſitation*; which ſhows, that God is not the Author of mans Deſtruction, as ſome would make him, who hold that Point or Principle of Reprobation; but that man hath Deſtroyed himſelf, according to the Prophets Words, *Hoſea* 13. 9. *O* Iſrael, *thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf.* And this I really do believe, that God hath given to all People upon the Face of the Earth a day and time of Viſitation, as he did unto *Jeruſalem*: And ſeeing it is thus, what manner of perſons ought we to be in all holy and godly Converſation? The firſt Birth being of the Earth earthly; and as the Apoſtle ſaith, ſpeaking of themſelves as well as others, *Among whom alſo we all had our Converſation in times paſt, in the Luſts of the Fleſh, and were by nature the Children of Wrath, even as others*, Eph. 2. 3. Which is a ſtate of Death, and Darkneſs, and Diſobedience, Loving and Delighting in the Creature more then in God the Creator, having the Heart and Mind alinated and ſeperated from a Life in God and Righteouſneſs, and their cheif Delight and Pleaſure in things below the Lord, and of this VVorld, and their Minds moſtly exerciſed thereupon, with great Delight and Pleaſure, being not ſubject to the Lord that made them, nor willing to be led and guided by his good Spirit, but chuſing and joyning with that which doth moſt

moſt agree with their carnal ſenſual Minds; neither knowing a Bridle to their Tongue; though they may make a great profeſſion of God, and Chriſt, and Scriptures, and yet their Religion but vain; as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *If any man among you ſeem to be Religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, that mans Religion is vain*, James 1. 26. And if this be ſo as I certainly believe it is, then how many mens Religions will prove but vain? who love and delight ſo much in fooliſh Talking and Jeſting, which are not convenient, *Eph.* 5. 4. And let Experience ſpake to this, whether it be not much the Practice both of Prieſts and People, when they are together; and what Benefit do any of you find by Reading and Speaking of the Scriptures, while you do not Live and Walk accordingly? This doth diſcover your Hypocriſie, and will be a witneſs againſt you: Be not deceived, God will not be mocked, for whatſoever a man ſoweth that ſhall he alſo Reap, as the Apoſtle is very expreſs, *Gal.* 6. 8. *He that ſoweth to the Fleſh, ſhall of the Fleſh reap Corruption; and he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap Life Everlaſting.* (Now Mark) here is a ſowing to the Fleſh and to the Spirit, and a reaping accordingly; neither are ſuch willing to take up the daily Croſs, without which none can be his Diſciple, take his own Words for it, *If any man*

will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Croſs daily, and follow me, Luke 9. 23. Nor yet a true Love to Brethren, which is a great evidence and token of an Eternal and Everlaſting Inheritance, 1 *John* 3. 14. where the Apoſtle ſaith, *We know we are paſt from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren.* And how far are unregenerate People from this, as is manifeſt by their Fruits; what Pride, Covetouſneſs, Envying and Deſtroying one an other and that about Carnal, Earthly things; and this in ſhort is the eſtate of too many People upon the Face of the whole Earth, in one degree or other, in the firſt Nature, before the work of Regeneration be known or witneſſed.

But being Changed and Redeemed, by the effectual working and opperation of the holy divine Spirit of God upon the Heart; then a great Work wrought and witneſſed, a new Heart, a new Mind, new Love, new Delight, old things are paſſed away, and all things become new; and then, a loving God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and thy Neighbour as thy ſelf, and a Croſs taken up to all the Worlds Ways, Delights and Pleaſures, Cuſtoms, Fellowſhips and Faſhions, though heretofore never ſo much loved and delighted in; and the Heart, Mind and Spirit exerciſed in, and upon Heavenly and Spiritual things, being

being alive thereunto, and dead unto the World and worldly things which have Evil in them; according to *David*, that man of God, of whom it is ſaid, *His delight was in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he meditate Day and Night*. Pſal. 1. 2. And ſuch become willing to do, or to ſuffer for God and his Truth, and bear a faithful Teſtimony for him, againſt that which is evil in all its appearances, being ſeperated from the World its Ways and Worſhips, which are out of the Spirit, into the Worſhip in the Spirit, and in the Truth; being kept in the holy fear and dread of the Lord at all times, whereby they dare not joyn with them whoſe Tongues are at Liberty, like thoſe who ſaid, *Our Tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* Pſal. 12. 4. But ſuch are out of the fear of the Lord which keeps down and under that vain, light, airy Spirit of the World; and here is not only a talking and profeſſion of Religion, but a living and walking accordingly: For this I knovv, that that Religion, Profeſſion and Worſhip, be what it will, in which People are not redeemed and changed out of their vain Converſation, in that Religion, Poſeſſion and Worſhip their Souls can never be ſaved, according to Chriſts Doctrine, *Except a man be born again he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*; and ſeeing it is thus, let all preſs forward, that they may attain to that

pure

Pure and undefiled Religion which keeps unſpotted from the World; and ſuch will become good Patrons and Examples in their places, having a conſtant care over their Thoughts and Words, like good *David*, who ſaid, *I will take heed to my Ways, that I ſin not with my Tongue: I will keep my Mouth with a Bridle, while the Wicked is before me*, Pſal. 39. 1. A good Man, a bleſſed Condition; but how unlike unto *David* are many profeſſing Chriſtians now, both Prieſts and People, who talk much of God and Chriſt, and Scriptures for their Rule; but how little do they endeavour to Live and Walk accordingly: Is it not plain Scripture, and Chriſts own Words, *That for every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak they ſhall give account at the day of Judgment.* And yet how common are not only idle Words but invoked Oaths, and other great Abominations among a People profeſſing Chriſtianity, for which we may juſtly fear a Judgment come over the Nation. Oh that the Lord would give Repentance, that his Wrath might be appeaſed; and Bleſſed, and Happy are all they whoſe Hearts and Minds are redeemed out of the Evil of this VVorld, and out of the Pleaſures thereof, into that one true Fellowſhip the Apoſtle declares of, 1 *John* 1. 7. *If we walk in the Light as he is in the Light, we have Fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood*

of

of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all Sin. Here is the new Creation, and ſecond Birth, Chriſt ſpoke of, known; and Bleſſed, and for ever Bleſſed are all they that are VVitneſſes hereof, ye for ever and for evermore, Amen.

From a Lover of Truth and Righteouſneſs.

Dalehead in *Cumberland* the 12th of the 8th Month, 1686.

Thomas Laythes.

THE END.